

In the claims

The following is an amendment to and complete listing of the claims that replaces all other listings of claims in this application.

1. (currently amended) A non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly for a vehicle having a restraining belt, the buckle assembly comprising; a buckle including a frame and a housing at least partially covering said frame, said housing having a front and rear ends and opposite sides, a latch plate receiving channel defined within said housing, an opening in said front end of said housing communicating with said latch plate receiving channel and of a size to receive a latch plate therein, a latch plate having a pair of spaced locking tongs including hooked end portions, a pair of latching mechanisms slidable mounted within said housing so as to be reciprocally movable in a guide channel defined within said housing and which extends transversely to a central longitudinal axis of said housing which extends from said front to said rear ends, biasing means disposed between said pair of latching mechanisms for urging said latching mechanisms in opposite directions toward ~~[[a]] first outer locking position~~ positions wherein said latching mechanisms are engageable with said locking tongs of said latch plate when said latch plate is

inserted in said housing, release means engageable with said latching mechanisms for moving said latching mechanisms simultaneously inwardly towards said central axis of said housing to [[a]] second release ~~position~~ positions wherein said latching mechanisms are disengaged from said locking tongs of said latch plate so that said latch plate may be removed from said buckle housing, [[and]] said biasing means constantly urging said latching mechanisms toward said first locking position with oppositely directed forces such that when one of said latching mechanisms is urged toward said second release position by a force, a simultaneous and substantially equal increase in force is applied by said biasing means to retain the other latching mechanism in said first locking position thereof such that said latching mechanisms are only ~~releaseable~~ released upon simultaneous application of forces to move said latching mechanisms from said first locking ~~position~~ positions to said second release ~~position~~ positions, said release means for simultaneously moving said latching mechanisms to said second release position including a slide release member including a pair of spaced projections extending into said housing so as to be selectively engageable with said latching mechanisms, said slide release member including a manually engageable portion to urge said slide release member from a first position to a second position in which said spaced projections urge said latching

mechanisms simultaneously to said second release positions, an inertia lock slidably mounted in said housing independently of said latch plate, and said inertial lock normally being in a position remote from said latching mechanisms and being moveable to a position intermediate said latching mechanisms to prevent said latching mechanisms from moving to said second release positions thereof if an inertial force is applied to said slide release member to drive said slide release member inwardly of said housing toward said second position thereof.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim [[2]] 1 wherein each of said latching mechanisms includes a slide block including an outer tapered face which is engageable by one of said locking tongs when said latching mechanism is in said first locking position, said tapered face terminating at a lock dog for engaging said hooked end portion of one of said locking tongs of said latch plate.

5. (original) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim 4 including a pair of spaced guide blocks mounted in

said housing and defining said guide channel therebetween, and each of said slide blocks including means for engaging said guide blocks to prevent said slide blocks from being disengaged from within said guide channel.

6. (original) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim 5 wherein said buckle frame includes a pair of opposing sidewalls defining opposing channels for receiving said locking tongs therein when said latch plate is inserted within said opening in said housing.

7. (canceled)

8. (Currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim [[7]] 1 in which said housing includes a domed portion for selectively receiving said ~~push-button~~ manually engageable portion when said ~~push-button~~ manually engageable portion is urged to move said slide release member to said second position thereof.

9. (canceled)

10. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint buckle

assembly of claim [[7]] 1 in which said buckle frame includes a pair of opposing side walls defining guide channels for said slide release member, and means for retaining said slide release member in sliding relationship within said ~~opposing~~ guide channels.

11. (original) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim 10 wherein each of said latching mechanisms includes a slide block including an outer tapered face which is engageable by one of said locking tongs when said latching mechanism is in said first locking position, said tapered face terminating at a lock dog for engaging said hooked end portion of one of said locking tongs of said latch plate.

12. (original) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim 11 including a pair of spaced guide members mounted in said housing and defining said guide channel therebetween, and each of said slide blocks including means for engaging said guide members to prevent said slide blocks from being disengaged from within said guide channel.

13. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim 12 including a first resilient means mounted between one of said one guide members and said slide release

member for normally urging said slide release member to [[its]]
the first position thereof.

14. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint
buckle assembly of claim 13 including second resilient means for
urging said latch plate from said buckle housing when said
latching mechanisms are moved to said second release ~~position~~
positions.

15. (canceled)

16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint
buckle assembly of claim [[16]] 1 including biasing means for
resiliently ~~biasing~~ urging said inertia lock away from said
latching mechanisms.

18. (canceled)

19. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint buckle
assembly of claim [[18]] 5 wherein said inertial lock includes a
body from which extends a tang which extends within a slot
defined in one of said guide members, said tang being urged

through said slot and intermediate said latching mechanisms when [[the]] an inertial force is applied to said slide release member to drive said slide release member inwardly of said housing, and resilient means for urging said body away from said one of said guide member.

20. (currently amended) The non-inertial release restraint buckle assembly of claim 19 including means for guiding said tang [[with]] within said slot.

21. A method of providing a non-inertial safety restraint system for vehicles which system includes a latch plate having a pair of spaced locking tongs, a buckle including housing having an interior channel for selectively receiving the latch plate and a pair of oppositely oriented latching mechanisms movable within the housing from [[a]] first locking ~~position~~ positions engaging the locking tongs of the latch plate to retain the latch plate within the housing to a second ~~position~~ positions to permit insertion and removal of the latch plate relative to the interior channel of the housing, and wherein ~~at least one~~ a manually operable release ~~push-button member~~ is provided for simultaneously moving the latching mechanisms to the second release ~~position~~ positions, the method including;

a) continuously urging the pair of latching mechanisms to

the first locking ~~position~~ positions thereof by ~~generally~~
substantially equal and opposite resilient force,

b) moving the pair of latching mechanisms from the first locking ~~position~~ positions thereof to the second release ~~position~~ positions thereof as the latch plate is being inserted within the housing and such that when the latch plate is fully inserted within the housing the pair of latching mechanisms are moved to the first locking ~~position~~ positions thereof to prevent withdrawal of the latch plate from the buckle housing, [[and]]

c) releasing the latch plate from the pair of latching mechanisms only upon the simultaneous application of opposite force to each of the latching mechanisms to move them toward one another within the housing to thereby move them to the second release position thereof, and

d) providing an inertial lock that is independently movable with respect to the release member and latch plate from a position spaced from the latching mechanisms to a position intermediate the latching mechanisms and preventing thereby the pair of latching mechanisms from moving toward one another whenever a non-manual force is applied relative to the housing which would tend to drive the manually operable release member into the housing.

22. (canceled)

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 21 wherein the step of continuously urging includes providing resilient means between each of the pair of oppositely oriented latching mechanisms such that any force applied toward one of the pair of latch mechanisms to move the one of the pair of latching mechanisms to the second release position thereof applies an equal force simultaneously to the other of the pair of latching mechanisms to urge the other of the latching mechanisms to remain in the first locking position thereof to prevent the latch plate from being released by inertial forces applied to the buckle.

24. (canceled)